

SECTION 1031
MAINTENANCE OF THE MEANS OF EGRESS

1031.1 General. The *means of egress* for buildings or portions thereof shall be maintained in accordance with this section.

1031.2 Reliability. Required *exit accesses*, *exits* and *exit discharges* shall be continuously maintained free from obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency where the building area served by the *means of egress* is occupied. An *exit* or *exit passageway* shall not be used for any purpose that interferes with a *means of egress*.

1031.2.1 Security devices and egress locks. Security devices affecting *means of egress* shall be subject to approval of the *fire code official*. Security devices and locking arrangements in the *means of egress* that restrict, control, or delay egress shall be installed and maintained as required by this chapter.

[BE] 1031.2.2 Locking arrangements in educational occupancies. In Group E occupancies, Group B educational occupancies and Group I-4 occupancies, egress doors from classrooms, offices and other occupied rooms shall be permitted to be provided with locking arrangements designed to keep intruders from entering the room where all of the following conditions are met:

1. The door shall be capable of being unlocked from outside the room with a key or other approved means.
2. The door shall be openable from within the room in accordance with Section 1010.1.9.
3. Modifications shall not be made to existing listed panic hardware, fire door hardware or door closers.
4. Modifications to fire door assemblies shall be in accordance with NFPA 80.

1031.3 Obstructions. A *means of egress* shall be free from obstructions that would prevent its use, including the accumulation of snow and ice.

1031.3.1 Group I-2. In Group I-2, the required clear width for *aisles*, *corridors* and *ramps* that are part of the required *means of egress* shall comply with Section 1020.2. The facility shall have a plan to maintain the required clear width during emergency situations.

Exception: In areas required for bed movement, equipment shall be permitted in the required width where all of the following provisions are met:

1. The equipment is low hazard and wheeled.
2. The equipment does not reduce the effective clear width for the *means of egress* to less than 5 feet (1525 mm).
3. The equipment is limited to:
 - 3.1. Equipment and carts in use.
 - 3.2. Medical emergency equipment.
 - 3.3. Infection control carts.
 - 3.4. Patient lift and transportation equipment.
4. Medical emergency equipment and patient lift and transportation equipment, when not in use, are required to be located on one side of the corridor.
5. The equipment is limited in number to not more than one per patient sleeping room or patient care room within each smoke compartment.

[BE] 1031.4 Exit signs. Exit signs shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the building code that was in effect at the time of construction and the applicable provisions in Section 1104. Decorations, furnishings, equipment or adjacent signage that impairs the visibility of exit signs, creates confusion or prevents identification of the *exit* shall not be allowed.

1031.5 Nonexit identification. Where a door is adjacent to, constructed similar to and can be confused with a *means of egress* door, that door shall be identified with an *approved* sign that identifies the room name or use of the room.

1031.6 Finishes, furnishings and decorations. Means of egress doors shall be maintained in such a manner as to be distinguishable from the adjacent construction and finishes such that the doors are easily recognizable as doors. Furnishings, decorations or other objects shall not be placed so as to obstruct *exits*, access thereto, egress therefrom,

or visibility thereof. Hangings and draperies shall not be placed over exit doors or otherwise be located to conceal or obstruct an *exit*. Mirrors shall not be placed on *exit* doors. Mirrors shall not be placed in or adjacent to any *exit* in such a manner as to confuse the direction of exit.

1031.7 Emergency escape and rescue openings. Required *emergency escape and rescue openings* shall be maintained in accordance with the that was code in effect at the time of construction, and both of the following:

1. Required *emergency escape and rescue openings* shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools.
2. Bars, grilles, grates or similar devices are allowed to be placed over *emergency escape and rescue openings* provided that the minimum net clear opening size complies with the code that was in effect at the time of construction and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the *emergency escape and rescue opening*.

1031.8 Inspection, testing and maintenance. Two-way communication systems for *areas of refuge* shall be inspected and tested on a yearly basis to verify that all components are operational. Where required, the tests shall be conducted in the presence of the *fire code official*. Records of inspection, testing and maintenance shall be maintained.

1031.9 Floor identification signs. The floor identification signs required by Sections 1023.9 and 1104.24 shall be maintained in an *approved* manner.

1031.10 Emergency lighting equipment inspection and testing. Emergency lighting shall be maintained in accordance with Section 1008 and shall be inspected and tested in accordance with Sections 1031.10.1 and 1031.10.2.

1031.10.1 Activation test. Emergency lighting equipment shall be tested monthly for a duration of not less than 30 seconds. The test shall be performed manually or by an automated self-testing and self-diagnostic routine. Where testing is performed by self-testing and self-diagnostics, a visual inspection of the emergency lighting equipment shall be conducted monthly to identify any equipment displaying a trouble indicator or that has become damaged or otherwise impaired.

1031.10.2 Power test. Battery-powered emergency lighting equipment shall be tested annually by operating the equipment on battery power for not less than 90 minutes.